



Labor & Economic Briefing

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Here is a summary of headlining accomplishments from the last month:

Creating & Retaining Michigan Jobs

Governor Announces Major Expansions and Consolidations Create Nearly 6,000 Michigan Jobs -State Assistance Leads to Manufacturing and High-Tech Growth:

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced seven major economic development projects that are expected to create or retain nearly 6,000 Michigan jobs and spur more than \$520 million in private investment. General Motors, Delfield, Haworth, Lacks Enterprises and INCAT Systems are among the companies securing jobs for Michigan workers as a result of assistance offered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). In her 2004 State of the State address, Governor Granholm announced a focused plan for achieving a powerhouse economy. So far this year, the governor and the MEDC have announced the creation or retention of approximately 23,344 jobs as a result of targeted assistance provided by the MEDC. The seven major economic development projects below are expected to create or retain a total of 5,987 Michigan jobs. According to a University of Michigan economic analysis, 3,543 of those jobs will be created directly by the companies, and the other 2,444 indirect jobs are expected to result from increased economic activity associated with the company expansions.



**Governor
Jennifer M.
Granholm**

Company Expansions:

- ***Haworth Inc., West Michigan:*** The company will consolidate four out-of-state manufacturing and distribution operations to existing facilities in Holland, Allegan and Big Rapids. The \$42.7 million project also includes a major reconstruction of Haworth's 25-year-old world headquarters in Holland, and is expected to result in 2,414 new Michigan jobs, including 1,000 jobs (mostly manufacturing) directly by the company.
- ***The Delfield Company, Mt. Pleasant:*** The company will add a new production line to its Mt. Pleasant operations that will result in 261 new Michigan jobs, including 219 directly by the company. The company intends to invest \$4 million to purchase new machinery and equipment to support the development and custom manufacturing of a refrigeration unit for a multi-national restaurant chain.
- ***INCAT Systems, Novi:*** U.K.-based INCAT International Ltd. will expand at its headquarters in Novi, investing \$7 million in computing and office equipment, resulting in the creation of 300 new direct jobs and an additional 235 indirect Michigan jobs over the next 10 years.
- ***Lacks Enterprises, Kentwood:*** The auto supplier will undertake a five-year, five-phase expansion of its operations in Kentwood that is expected to result in 816 new Michigan jobs, including 424 directly by the company. Investment of \$51 million will be used for construction of new plating and molding facilities, a new distribution center and additions to molding and assembly operations. Phase one of the expansion, representing investment of \$17.5 million and the creation of 182 jobs, is slated for completion next summer.

Brownfield Redevelopments:

- ***General Motors Powertrain Division, Pontiac:*** GM will centralize all powertrain product engineering and laboratory services to a redeveloped Pontiac Campus, retaining 1,600 Michigan jobs. The project will result in a \$385 million investment in Pontiac, and includes construction of a 431,000-square-foot addition for testing labs and equipment.
- ***Family Dollar Stores, Detroit:*** Plans call for construction of a 10,000-square-foot Family Dollar store, representing private investment of \$777,662, on a blighted site along West Vernor Highway on Detroit's west side. The project will result in the creation of 11 jobs. The property to be redeveloped is presently occupied by two abandoned buildings and a junkyard.
- ***Mid Towne Village, Grand Rapids:*** This project involves the transformation of a six-acre pocket of blighted housing into a mixed-use development of commercial, office, residential and parking space. The project is expected to generate \$30 million in private investment.

MEGA Program Attracts Six More Major Expansions with 1,511 New Michigan Jobs: The governor announced six major economic development projects that are expected to create 1,511 new Michigan jobs and spur nearly \$107 million in private investment. Expansions by Cobasys, Guardian Fiberglass, Material Sciences Corp. and Spartan Chassis Inc., as well as brownfield rehab projects in the cities of Cheboygan and Grand Haven, are receiving assistance offered by the MEDC. The projects will help to create 770 direct jobs for Michigan workers. According to a University of Michigan economic analysis, another 741 indirect jobs are expected to result from increased economic activity associated with the company expansions, for a total of 1,511 jobs. The projects are:

Company Expansions:

- **Cobasys, Orion Township:** The company will invest an estimated \$1.5 million to complete an office building and purchase new equipment as it consolidates three plants currently operating in Troy to a single 70,000-square-foot facility in Orion Township. The company, which chose Michigan over Ohio, designs, manufactures and sells nickel metal hydride (NiMH) battery systems for the emerging hybrid electric vehicle market. The project is expected to create 50 new jobs in the first year and a total of 150 jobs within five years.
- **Guardian Fiberglass, Albion:** The company will invest \$26.5 million to expand its manufacturing operations in Albion. It is hoped that a Single Business Tax (SBT) credit valued at more than \$1.5 million will convince the company to expand in Michigan instead of at a competing site in Texas. A subsidiary of Guardian Industries in Auburn Hills, the Albion facility manufactures fiberglass insulation for residential and commercial buildings. The expansion will create a total of 288 jobs including 150 directly by the company. Guardian Industries currently employs 1,543 in the state including 224 at the Albion facility.
- **Material Sciences Corp. (MSC), Plymouth Township:** The Illinois-based company plans to invest \$17.4 million to establish a 54,000-square-foot technical center in Plymouth Township instead of at a competing site in Ohio. MSC specializes in developing solutions that help reduce noise and heat problems related to the operation of automotive, appliance, office furniture, heating and cooling, and electronics products. The expansion is expected to create six new positions in the first year of the project for a total of 17 by 2014. In addition, the company will relocate 24 current employees in Farmington Hills to the new facility.
- **Spartan Chassis Inc., Charlotte:** The company, a manufacturer of custom chassis for motor homes, fire trucks and other specialty vehicles, plans to invest \$7.3 million to expand its operations in Charlotte instead of Kentucky. The project will permit the community's largest employer to grow its current product line in response to the company's recent contracts with Fleetwood RV and Newmar Corporation. The expansion is expected to create a total of 1,056 jobs, 415 directly by the company.

Brownfield Redevelopments:

- **Cheboygan** will redevelop four parcels of blighted property on the Cheboygan riverfront near the corner of Pine and Main streets. J & D Investments of Cheboygan LLC plans to acquire and transform the site into a mixed-use development to include retail and office space and a full-service marina with a boat storage facility. The city will use tax capture valued at \$247,250 for demolition and asbestos contamination cleanup. The new development, to be known as Mariner Village, is expected to create 28 new jobs and give rise to more than \$4.1 million in private investment.
- **Grand Haven** plans to redevelop 19 acres of vacant, contaminated property near the corner of Jackson Street and Beacon Boulevard for mixed-use development consisting of multi-family housing and commercial, retail and office space. The city will utilize state and local tax capture valued at more than \$10.4 million for improvements including construction of a public boardwalk along the river as well as water, sewer and road upgrades. The city owns the property and is in the process of obtaining a developer for the project, which is expected to spur \$50 million in private investment.

Positioning Michigan in the Global Technology Market

Mount Pleasant Firm Wins First Matching Grant from Tech Tri-Corridor Fund: Mount Pleasant-based DCM Associates, a company developing online training courses for the handling of hazardous materials, has become the first startup company to qualify for a matching grant from the Michigan Technology Tri-Corridor's Emerging Business Fund. The matching fund helps entrepreneurs strengthen their applications for federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grants in the life sciences, homeland security and advanced automotive technology sectors. The Technology Tri-Corridor fosters growth in Michigan's life sciences, advanced automotive technologies and homeland security industries through funding and resource collaboration, focusing on emerging technology sectors. For more information, visit <http://www.medc.michigan.org/ttc>.

Michigan Promotes Technology Tri-Corridor at BIO 2004: With a 20-by-50 pavilion and many Michigan partners on hand, the MEDC sent a strong message at the BIO 2004 conference in San Francisco promoting Michigan's biotech industry and the life sciences component of the Michigan Technology Tri-Corridor. BIO 2004 is the world's largest biotechnology gathering, with record attendance approaching 17,000 people. The MEDC's presence enabled Michigan to showcase its life sciences industry success story to conference attendees and an international media market for maximum exposure. Michigan life sciences companies attending sought venture capital funding and worked to make deals with new customers and market themselves.



PharmOptima, a Kalamazoo life sciences company, prospect a French company as a potential new customer in the MEDC's BIO 2004 pavilion.

Celebrating Michigan Business Success

Michigan Business Success Celebrated: Don Jakeway, president and CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, presented 32 awards in 11 categories of economic development excellence at the 7th annual Business Success Celebration. The event, traditionally held at the Michigan State Capitol Rotunda, honors top Michigan businesses, economic development groups, educators and community leaders. Following are this year's award categories and honorees:

1. Economic Development — Tourism: Boyne USA, Grand Mountain Lodge; Food Processing: Champion Foods; High Technology: Dow Corning Compound Semiconductor Solutions; Jobs Retention and Creation: Ford Motor, Wayne Assembly; Non-Manufacturing Investment: Hyundai America Technical Center; Manufacturing Plant Revitalization: Michigan Seamless Tube; and Non-Automotive Manufacturing Investment: Technicolor Corp.
2. Economic Development Partners of the Year - Joyce Seitz, economic development coordinator, city of Madison Heights; and Sharon Witt, executive director, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance
3. Economic Development Journalism - Booth Newspapers
4. Partner of the Year - Largest Private Investment: Plastech Engineered Products
5. Education - Grand Valley State University
6. Renaissance Zone - Peterson Farms Inc.
7. SmartZone - Woodward Technology Corridor SmartZone - TechTown
8. Downtown Development - Boji Project, downtown Lansing and downtown market study, city of Jackson
9. Brownfield Project - Acheson Southside Redevelopment Project, Port Huron
10. Main Streets - city of Boyne City, village of Calumet, city of Marshall, and city of Portland
11. Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns: city of Adrian, city of Battle Creek, city of Brighton, city of Buchanan, city of Cheboygan, city of Davison, city of Grand Haven, village of Jonesville, village of Middleville, city of Mt. Pleasant, and city of Norway

Fostering Vibrant Michigan Cities and Urban Centers

2004 Michigan Main Street Winners Announced: This year's designees of the 2004 Michigan Main Street competition, Clare, Muskegon and Niles, will receive intensive, year-round training through the MEDC, with a focus on revitalization strategies designed to attract new business investment and job creation to their central business districts. This is the second year that the MEDC has administered the intensive training program, which follows the four-step approach developed by the Main Street National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. The Main Street approach encompasses promoting long-term design concepts, marketing, community cooperation and organization, and encouraging economic restructuring to strengthen and expand the existing economic base to meet new business opportunities. The competitive application process began in February 2004 with seven communities submitting letters of intent. These were narrowed down to the three finalists, who were then invited to present formal applications to a team of officials from 12 state and local development organizations. All three finalist communities were judged to have highly meritorious proposals and were designated as this year's Main Street communities. The communities were selected based on the following factors:

- The physical characteristics of the proposed Main Street area;
- The capacity of the downtown business organization;
- Local economic factors; and
- The willingness of the community to actively participate, including a \$20,000 minimum commitment to partially cover program costs.

Michigan is now one of 39 states to administer a Main Street program. Since the national Main Street Center began its work in 1980, Main Street communities have created more than \$17 billion in public and private investments in physical improvements, more than 57,000 new businesses, and more than 231,000 new jobs.



MEDC President and CEO Don Jakeway announces Michigan Main Street recipients.

Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns Attracts 12 Entries: Twelve communities across the state are now competing for funding through the Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns program. As many as 10 will ultimately be chosen to work with the MEDC and HyettPalma, a national downtown consulting firm, to formulate downtown economic development action agendas. Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns fosters community revitalization by helping communities form action plans to encourage economic growth. This year, applications were received from Charlotte, Fremont, Highland Park, Houghton, Howard City, Imlay City, Ionia, Linden, Menominee, Milan, Saline and Wayland. The MEDC, in partnership with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and the Michigan Municipal League (MML), recently launched the second year of the competitive grant program. The MEDC and MSHDA have committed a total of \$200,000 to fund the project. The action agendas that winning communities will formulate entail a long-term economic development vision, market analysis to determine the potential of the downtown area, a definitive course of action, and formation of a public/private management team to implement the action plan. The estimated time for formulating a plan is approximately five months, with implementation estimated to take five years. MEDC and MSHDA staff members are in the process of evaluating the applications, with assistance from the MML. Selections will be announced in September.

MEDC CEO Visits Muskegon and Grand Haven: MEDC President and CEO Don Jakeway traveled to Muskegon to meet with local economic development and business leaders, local officials and the media. After an editorial board meeting with the Muskegon Chronicle, he walked to the downtown location of the Michigan Main Street announcement (see previous story). Later in the afternoon, Jakeway took a guided tour that highlighted many of the city's assets, including the Grand Valley State University Water Resources Institute, the Muskegon SmartZone and Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center (MAREC), and the new Lake Michigan Ferry. He also spoke at a large gathering of business leaders at the Business Direct Weekly forum in Grand Haven. He highlighted the work of the MEDC in both retaining and attracting business investment and jobs in the state. With a reference to the nearby Alternative and Renewable Energy Center, he also emphasized the importance of pursuing the next generations of energy technology. He also toured Grand Haven and the Shape Corporation facilities.



MAREC Executive Director Imad Mahawili explains the system that monitors the facility's electricity-generating stationary fuel cell to Don Jakeway of the MEDC.

Assistance to Revitalize Three Brownfield Sites in Lansing: Single Business Tax (SBT) credits offered through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) will help turn three presently blighted, contaminated or otherwise unusable Lansing sites into productive developments, **spurring more than \$10.7 million in private investment** and **creating as many as 20 jobs** for Michigan workers. Brownfield SBT credits valued at a total of more than \$1 million were awarded to the following Lansing projects:

- **3500 South MLK LLC** will use a \$250,000 credit to help redevelop the former Metro Ford auto dealership into an office, retail, warehouse and storage facility. The project is expected to spur more than \$2.5 million in private investment and create approximately 10 new jobs. The city, in partnership with the Lansing Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, has agreed to support the redevelopment by capturing local taxes valued at approximately \$284,820 to help prepare the property for redevelopment.
- **Prudden Place Partners** will use a \$654,750 credit to develop vacant, contaminated property directly adjacent to the former Prudden Motor Wheel manufacturing facility, creating new residential apartments. The project is expected to spur more than \$6.5 million in private investment. The city has agreed to capture more than \$1.1 million in taxes through its Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to clean up the property in preparation for redevelopment.
- **Wenco Properties LLC** will renovate the former Styline building located at 1116 South Washington into a mixed-use development including office, commercial and eight loft apartment units. A tax credit valued at \$165,600 dollars will help facilitate the redevelopment of the property, which is expected create more than \$1.6 million in private investment and 10 jobs. The city has agreed to support the project through local Brownfield Redevelopment Authority tax capture valued at \$284,820.

Assistance to Revitalize Brownfield Sites in Cadillac, Detroit and Holland: Single Business Tax (SBT) credits offered through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) will help redevelop brownfield sites in Cadillac, Detroit and Holland, **spurring more than \$21 million in private investment** and **creating more than 133 new jobs** for Michigan workers. Brownfield SBT credits valued at a total of nearly \$2 million were awarded to the following projects:

- **Cadillac:** Lakeside Development Company will use a \$620,850 credit to help redevelop property located at 301 North Lake Street into 20 condominium units. The nearly one-acre parcel was the site of the former Kraft Creamery. It has remained vacant since 1988, when the original buildings were demolished. The project is expected to spur more than \$6.2 million in private investment. The city of Cadillac has approved an additional \$228,000 in grants to provide infrastructure improvements and prepare the property for redevelopment.
- **Detroit:** Plaza del Norte LLC will use a \$391,127 credit to transform blighted, tax-reverted property located on Bagley Avenue near 20th Street in southwest Detroit. Less than 500 feet from the Ambassador Bridge, the redevelopment will house the state of Michigan International Welcome Center and a small business incubator. The project is expected to create more than \$3.9 million in private investment and 63 new jobs.
- **Holland:** East 48th Street Properties will convert the former LifeSavers manufacturing plant at 635 East 48th Street by reconfiguring the 393,000-square-foot facility to accommodate up to six self-contained spaces for lease to industrial or manufacturing-related operations. A tax credit valued at \$1 million will facilitate redevelopment of the property, which is expected to create more than \$10.8 million in private investment and hundreds of new jobs as the spaces are leased. The project also received approval last January through the MEDC to capture approximately \$898,000 in state and local taxes for demolition and asbestos abatement.

Grant to Spur \$2.3 Million in Investment, Create 35 Jobs in Grand Haven: A Community Development Block Grant of \$700,000 to support a downtown redevelopment project in Grand Haven is expected to create 35 new jobs. The grant, made available through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), will help finance the redevelopment of underutilized properties into office and retail space and is expected to result in private investment of \$2.3 million. Grand Haven plans to use the funding to help finance the acquisition and redevelopment of three downtown properties. The city will also contribute an additional \$100,000 to help fund the project. Two development companies, Onemarket Properties and 22 Washington LLC have agreed to develop commercial buildings to house retail and office space on two of the sites. The city will build a public parking lot on the third site to service the needs of the new businesses.

Governor Announces MEDC Assistance to Help Create 123 Jobs and Promote Development in Five Communities: Gov. Jennifer Granholm announced more than \$1.2 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding that will lead to the creation of 123 new jobs and spur more than \$1.7 million in private investment in the Upper Peninsula communities of Bay de Noc Township and Hancock as well as Greenville, Hartford and Marlette in mid-Michigan. The grants, made available through the MEDC, will be used for infrastructure improvements leading to private investment and job creation.

- **Bay de Noc Township** will use a \$213,421 grant to help extend power lines to the Rapid River stone quarry for expansion of Halquist Stone. The township will contribute \$23,713 to the project, which is expected to create 12 new jobs and \$450,000 in private investment. The Wisconsin-based company fabricates and quarries building, landscape and paving stone for clients worldwide.
- The **city of Greenville** has been offered a \$500,000 grant to address the costs of road, water, sewer and electrical improvements necessary for the expansion of the city's industrial park. The city will contribute \$30,000 to the project. It is expected to create 50 new jobs and future opportunities for private investment.
- A \$360,000 grant offered to the **city of Hancock** will help Finlandia University provide the infrastructure necessary for conversion of an underutilized campus building into a business incubator. The Upper Peninsula university is expected to invest \$808,212 in the project, which will create 40 new jobs. The city will contribute \$40,000 toward the project.
- The **city of Hartford** on the state's southwest side has been offered \$90,000 for construction of a public parking lot to accommodate renovation and expansion of a historic downtown building into multi-unit retail space. Redstone Commercial Investments plans to invest \$450,000 to convert the building. The city of Hartford will commit \$10,000 to the project, which has the potential to create nine jobs.
- The **city of Marlette** plans to use a \$120,000 grant for a road to service the expansion of DGP Inc. The manufacturer of fiberglass parts for small transport buses plans to invest \$15,000 to expand its product line. The city will invest \$35,500 to offset the cost of road construction. The project is expected to create 12 new jobs.

\$2.7 Million for Downtown Housing Opportunities in Nine Communities from MEDC and MSHDA Partnership: More than \$2.7 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding will help create 77 housing units in nine Michigan downtowns and central business districts. The grants are being made available through a partnership between the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). "Housing is a vital component of successful downtown economic revitalization," Gov. Jennifer Granholm said. "Providing attractive housing choices will bring more residents to the heart of these communities, driving economic development and helping small businesses thrive." A total of 10 grants were awarded to the following nine communities and counties: Alma, Buchanan, Cheboygan County, Jonesville, Lapeer, Manistee, Norway, St. Johns and Shiawassee County. The grant applications were reviewed jointly by MEDC and MSHDA staff. Funding decisions were based primarily upon the project's impact on the overall revitalization efforts of the community and the demonstrated commitment of the community to downtown redevelopment. The grants require 25 percent in matching funds and must meet CDBG eligibility requirements. These are the grant projects:

- Alma: \$200,002 for rehabilitation of four single-family homes adjacent to downtown
- Buchanan: \$243,900 for rehabilitation of 12 rental units in mixed-use buildings along Front Street
- Cheboygan County: \$353,600 for creation of 10 housing units in vacant storage space above commercial buildings downtown
- Jonesville: \$365,800 for rehabilitation of 10 rental units in historic downtown
- Lapeer: \$182,900 for creation of 6 apartments in mixed-use buildings downtown
- Lapeer: \$375,000 for rehabilitation of the Lapeer Arts Center to include three rental units
- Manistee: \$243,900 for creation of eight apartments in mixed-use buildings in the central business district
- Norway: \$212,493 for creation of seven units in downtown
- St. Johns: \$449,000 for creation of 12 rental units in mixed use buildings in downtown
- Shiawassee County: \$110,295 for rehabilitation of five rental units in downtown Owosso



Promoting the Michigan Tourism Industry

Michigan's Hidden Treasures Showcase: In an effort to encourage Michigan residents to spend their vacation dollars closer to home, Gov. Jennifer Granholm led a group of reporters on a five-day trek throughout the state, showcasing a sampling of Michigan's hidden treasures ideal for summer travel. Each day during the weeklong initiative, Gov. Granholm was in a different part of the state, highlighting the variety of Michigan's lesser known attractions and recreational opportunities available to vacationers. Research shows that Michigan residents spend about \$4 billion while traveling in-state, and an additional \$4.7 billion traveling outside the state. It is hoped that the media attention generated by the tour will encourage residents to spend more time and money in-state this summer season.

At left, Gov. Granholm rafts the Sturgeon River in Indian River, Michigan with MEDC Senior Vice President George Zimmerman and media.

Building State & Local Partnerships

Genesee County Becomes Pioneer with State's First Land Bank Authority: An intergovernmental agreement between the newly created Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority and the Genesee County treasurer was signed July 7, 2004, to create the Genesee County Land Bank Authority. This is the first such intergovernmental agreement under the Land Bank Fast Track Act, which was signed into law by Governor Jennifer Granholm in January 2004. It is a model for such future local agreements. The act is seen as the most progressive legislation of its kind in the nation. The act created the Land Bank Fast Track Authority to deal with the state's inventory of tax-reverted property. The act also allows for the creation of land bank authorities at the county and local levels. By signing the agreement, Genesee County becomes the first local governmental unit to partner with the Land Bank Fast Track Authority and take advantage of the many powers granted under the new legislation. A pioneer in operating a land bank, Genesee County plans to use the additional powers granted it to strengthen its program and to aggressively and more efficiently maintain, manage and develop property it holds in the city of Flint and throughout Genesee County.



Michigan State Housing Development Authority Acting Executive Director Rick L. Laber and Genesee County Treasurer Daniel T. Kildee sign the Fast Track memorandum of understanding.

Creating Cool: The Economy of Arts and Culture

2004 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation Honors Projects in Michigan's Upper and Lower Peninsulas: Dr. William Anderson, director of the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries, presented the 2004 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation to six projects exemplifying a commitment to protecting Michigan's historic resources and to preserving the character of Michigan's unique communities. Dr. Anderson presented the awards on behalf of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm during a ceremony at the State Capitol. The award program, created in 2003, recognizes outstanding historic preservation projects throughout the state. Individuals, developers, corporations, academic institutions and units of government that have rehabilitated historic resources, conducted archaeological excavations, or implemented sound public policy may be considered for the award. The 2004 award recipients include:

- In Ann Arbor Township: Ann Arbor Township, Barton Village Board of Trustees, Washtenaw County Road Commission, and the Citizens for Foster Road Bridge Conservancy for the rehabilitation of the Maple Road (Foster) Bridge over the Huron River;
- In Big Rapids: Big Rapids Housing Commission and Hollander Development for the Nisbett Building and Fairman Building rehabilitation projects;
- In Detroit: Save Orchestra Hall, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestra Hall's generous donors for the rehabilitation of Orchestra Hall;
- In Escanaba: Escanaba Area Public Schools and Diekema Hamann Architecture for the Escanaba Junior High School rehabilitation and addition;
- In Grand Rapids: Pioneer Construction for the Berkey and Gay Factory and American Seating Factory Complex Rehabilitations; and
- In Kalamazoo: Eric, Tobi and Ryan Breisach for the 714 Wheaton Avenue State Tax Credit Project.



Pioneer Construction of Grand Rapids received a 2004 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation for its rehabilitation of the Berkey and Gay Furniture Factory (above left) and the American Seating Company Complex (above right) in Grand Rapids.



A Brownie troop helps Gov. Jennifer Granholm unveil the U.S. 12 Historic Heritage Route sign.

U.S. 12 Designated a Historic Heritage Route: As part of the "Travel Michigan Hidden Treasures Showcase," Governor Jennifer Granholm made a stop at the Walker Tavern Historic Complex for the dedication of U.S. 12 as a Historic Heritage Route. U.S. 12 — 209 miles of east-west corridor across southern Michigan's Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, Branch, Hillsdale, Lenawee, Washtenaw and Wayne counties — is one of the oldest roadways east of the Mississippi River. The corridor originally consisted of a network of centuries-old trails created by Native Americans and today retains a rich historic character and offers travelers an opportunity to enjoy many historical, cultural and recreational assets. Heritage Route designation, given by the Michigan Department of Transportation, will enhance efforts to market the highway, attracting those interested in cultural tourism and in turn boosting the economy of southern Michigan. The U.S. 12 Heritage Trail Council will promote and encourage preservation of the historic and cultural resources that make traveling along U.S. 12 a unique experience. A fitting location to officially dedicate the U.S. 12 Heritage Route, Walker Tavern was built in 1832 and originally served as a stagecoach stop. Now part of the Michigan Historical Museum system, the site features exhibits that interpret Michigan's frontier settlement and stagecoach era and is also one of the hubs for the National Automotive Heritage Area.

More Proof — Arts and Culture Spur Michigan's Economy: In the last issue of this newsletter, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) offered several reasons why the arts and culture industry is at the forefront of the new economy movement. Here are a few more examples of the

economic impact of arts and culture:

- MCACA-funded anchor organizations — major institutions that are widely recognized as hubs of significant arts and cultural activity — annually leverage over \$300 million in "cash match" funds.
- In fiscal year 2004, applicants to MCACA grant programs reported 16,361 total employees and expected to hire 6,764 new employees.
- Cultural tourism? In the 12 weeks that the Detroit Institute of Arts exhibited the work of Vincent Van Gogh, they saw an attendance figure of 308,000, \$2.5 million in ticket sales, \$2 million in shop sales, \$1 million in food sales, and 10,000 new memberships. The exhibit cost was \$2.9 million.

Local Cool City Pilot Program Grant Recipients Meet with Governor Granholm: Local Cool City Pilot Program grant recipients recently met with Gov. Jennifer Granholm and state officials at a day-long conference held at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

The conference outlined the process for grant recipients, including their roles and responsibilities associated with their projects. Twenty Cool City pilot projects are receiving catalyst grants of up to \$100,000 and will have access to more than \$100 million in state grants, loans and other resources. The initiative, designed to help foster the development of vibrant, attractive cities and urban centers, is part of Governor Granholm's economic development plan for Michigan. The projects receiving grants are located in Alpena, Bay City, Detroit, Ferndale, Flint, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Marquette, Port Huron, Portland, Saginaw, Saugatuck, Sault Ste. Marie, Traverse City, Warren and Ypsilanti. Each grant recipient will receive a catalyst grant of up to \$100,000, as well as access to a "resource toolbox" that includes information on more than 75 of the state's community improvement grants, loan programs, and assistance programs. Together, this "resource toolbox" and the catalyst grants leverage millions of existing dollars that are now being strategically directed to revitalization projects that present the best opportunity for success. DLEG Director David Hollister recently toured Cool Cities pilot projects in Alpena and Ypsilanti and will be visiting more in the months ahead. Representatives of the projects not designated as part of this pilot program attended an education and training session in Lansing on August 9 to meet with representatives from DLEG, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and the 14 other participating state departments to discuss how they can improve their applications for the next round of grants and determine what other resources might be available to them from the state's resource toolbox.



Above, Ypsilanti Mayor Cheryl Farmer leads Director Hollister on a tour of downtown Ypsilanti. Below, Jeff Gray, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve manager, shows Director Hollister and Alpena Assistant City Manager Eric Cline the plans for the redevelopment of the former Fletcher Paper Mill site in Alpena.



Above, Raymond Masters (right) shows puppets to DLEG Director David Hollister at the Riverside Arts Center, which was selected as one of the state's 20 Cool Cities pilot projects.



Promoting Safe Workplaces

Detroit Edison's Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant Receives State's Highest Safety and Health Award: Detroit Edison's Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant received the Michigan Voluntary Protection Program (MVPP) Star Award, the most prestigious safety and health award from the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) for workplace safety and health excellence. There are about 760 Detroit Edison employees and about 160 contract employees working at Fermi 2 and the Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO, Local No. 223, represents the utility employees. MIOSHA established the MVPP program to reward worksites with outstanding safety and health management systems that go beyond MIOSHA standards. MVPP companies have created a work environment where everyone accepts responsibility for safety every day. Since 1999, Michigan has recognized 16 MVPP Star companies. The Fermi 2 plant's incidence rates are well below the Michigan average for their SIC code, 491, Electric Services, which is considered a high-hazard industry. The Total Case Incidence Rate for the Fermi 2 plant was 2.3 in 2001, 0.8 in 2002, and 1.4 in 2003 — compared to 5.0 each year for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) industry average. The plant is committed to achieving excellence in environmental, health and safety protection. Detroit Edison is an investor-owned electric utility that generates, transmits and distributes electricity to 2.1 million customers in Southeast Michigan. Founded in 1903, it is the largest electric utility in the state, and the seventh largest in the nation. Detroit Edison is a subsidiary of DTE Energy (NYSE:DTE), a Detroit-based diversified energy company involved in the development and management of energy-related businesses and services nationwide.

Promoting Energy Efficiency

State Adopting New Residential Energy Code: State building codes are one of the tools that state government has to increase energy efficiency and reduce energy costs for building owners. In April 2003, the ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers) 90.1-1999 standard became the energy code for new commercial buildings in Michigan. This energy code upgrade replaced 1975 and 1980 standards, brought the state into compliance with federal law, and recognized the energy efficiency advancements in building equipment. The state is in the process of adopting a new residential energy code that is proposed to be effective January 1, 2005. The Energy Office has analyzed the benefits and costs of the new standard and estimated that net savings, i.e., energy cost savings minus the increase in mortgage costs, will be an average of \$882 per home during the first seven years of the mortgage. In addition to reducing the energy bills of building owners, the new energy codes will help the environment by reducing the air pollution caused by energy use. The energy codes help the Michigan economy since more dollars are spent on insulation, windows, and energy-efficient equipment and fewer dollars are spent on fuels that come from out of state.

Technical Assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy Available: The U.S. Department of Energy has an Office of Industrial Technologies that sponsors many technical assistance programs that can help manufacturers of all sizes become more productive through efficient use of motor systems (Motor Challenge), steam systems (Steam Challenge), compressed air (Compressed Air Challenge), and combined heat and power systems (Combined Heat & Power Challenge). Resources include computer software, case studies, best practices, training programs and other technical resources. Small and medium-size manufacturers can also receive no-cost energy, waste and productivity assessments from DOE-funded Industrial Assessment Centers. Michigan has an Industrial Assessment Center at the University of Michigan. For further information, visit http://interpro.engin.umich.edu/mfgeng_prog/IAC/ or call (734) 647-4790. The Energy Office, DLEG has a program to assist industry to access federal assistance. For more information, contact Dr. Thomas Borton at (734) 475-4244 or t.e.borton@att.net.

Protecting Michigan Consumers

MPSC Schedules Consumer Forums Around the State in September: The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) will host a series of consumer forums around Michigan in September. The forums are designed to inform consumers about changes in the electric, natural gas and telephone industries. MPSC Chair J. Peter Lark said a major focus of this year's forums will be the increase of wholesale natural gas prices and how the increase will affect monthly bills. Each consumer forum will include the latest information on electric and natural gas rates for the winter, opportunities to select an alternative electric or natural gas provider, and the status of local and long distance telephone service. A commissioner from the MPSC will be available at each forum to discuss these changes, explain how the commission makes decisions, and listen to questions and comments regarding utility service. Following is information on each upcoming consumer forum, all of which begin at 6 p.m.:

- Detroit – Thursday, Sept. 9, Greater Grace Temple, 23500 W. Seven Mile Rd.
- Flint – Tuesday, Sept. 14, Flint Municipal Center/City Hall Dome Auditorium (southern end of complex), 1101 S. Saginaw St.
- Hancock – Thursday, Sept. 16, Lakeview Manor Community Room, 1401 W. Quincy St.
- Monroe, Tuesday, Sept. 21, City Hall – Council Chambers, 120 East First St.
- Muskegon Thursday, Sept. 23, Grand Valley State University, Michigan Alternative & Renewable Energy Center (multi-purpose room) 200 Viridian Dr.
- Benton Harbor Tuesday, Sept. 28, City Hall – Commission Chambers, 200 East Wall Street
- Cheboygan Thursday, Sept. 30, City Hall- Council Chambers ,403 North Huron St.

Governor Granholm Signs Laws to Create Registry to Protect Children from E-Mail Advertising: Governor Granholm signed legislation that will create a child protection registry that will protect minors from unsolicited and inappropriate electronic mail. The registry will be established by July 1, 2005, and will be operated by DLEG, or contracted to a qualified third party. Public Act 241 of 2004 (SB 1025) establishes a child protection registry that will provide safeguards and prevent, to the extent possible, the disclosure of information to children through devices and mediums such as instant messaging addresses, wireless telephones and e-mail addresses, to name a few. Under the law, a person will be permitted to register addresses to which one or more minors have access. A person will be prohibited from sending a message to a registered address if the primary purpose is to advertise or sell a product or service that a minor is prohibited by law from purchasing, viewing, possessing, participating in or otherwise receiving. Violations are subject to criminal penalties. The new law assigns enforcement responsibility to the Department of Attorney General. Civil actions brought by private parties are also authorized.

Office of Financial and Insurance Services Provides Consumers with Auto Repair Rights Information: Persons with questions about their auto repair rights under their Michigan no-fault auto insurance policy will find helpful answers in a new consumer publication from the Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS). "Auto Repair Rights Under a Michigan No-Fault Policy" is now available either online at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/FIS-PUB_0225_7_04_autorepair_IC1_96392_7.pdf or by calling the Consumer Services Division of OFIS toll free at 877-999-6442 to request it. The publication explains the provisions of newly enacted Public Act 190 of 2004, which clarifies a consumer's auto repair rights. The act can be accessed online at <http://www.mileg.org/documents/2003-2004/publicact/pdf/2004-PA-0190.pdf>. The publication will help consumers understand what their rights are, especially as they pertain to the selection of a repair facility. Drivers frequently ask if they have to use a repair facility selected by their insurance company or if they can take their cars elsewhere for repair work and still have it paid by their insurance company. Consumers are also encouraged to contact the Consumer Services Division of OFIS at the above toll-free number or online at <http://www.michigan.gov/ofis> if they are denied coverage or benefits based on their choice of auto repair facilities or if they are unable to resolve a dispute with their insurance company.

Commissioner Watters Announces Most Banks Will Pay Reduced Fees: Office of Financial & Insurance Services (OFIS) Commissioner Linda A. Watters announced that most Michigan banks will pay lower fees this year than they did last year. "State bank assets grew more than 27 percent last year, which enabled us to reduce the supervisory fee rates for commercial and savings banks by 25 percent," Watters said. Unchanged are the trust fee schedule, the discount for smaller banks in multibank holding companies, the surcharge on banks requiring above-normal oversight, and fee minimums. The Michigan Banking Code and the Michigan Savings Bank Act require the commissioner to establish a schedule of supervisory fees. The schedule is set annually. Commissioner Watters has issued Bulletin 2004-02-BT, which explains the new fee schedule in detail. That bulletin may be accessed on the OFIS Web site, <http://www.michigan.gov/ofis>, by clicking on Bulletins and then clicking on this particular bulletin number under What's New. Bankers with questions about the new supervisory fee schedule should call OFIS toll free at (877) 999-6442.

Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS) Offers Mortgage Industry Seminars: OFIS is offering free, quarterly educational seminars designed to inform and educate mortgage licensees/registrants. Topics for the seminars include a review of Michigan's laws, an explanation of the role OFIS plays as regulator; and an overview of the examination process for the mortgage industry. The next seminar dates and locations are: November 10, 2004, Lansing; February 9, 2005, Troy; and May 11, 2005, Grand Rapids. Each seminar will last approximately three hours. More information on the specific times and locations, as well as online registration, can be found at the OFIS Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/ofis>. Click on Seminar Registration on the right side of the page; then click on Mortgage Seminars.

Commissioner Watters Urges Banks and Credit Unions to Increase Efforts to Protect Vulnerable Adults: Office of Financial & Insurance Services (OFIS) Commissioner Linda A. Watters officially asked Michigan's state-chartered banks and credit unions to step up their efforts to prevent the victimization of those individuals most vulnerable to fraudulent scams. "I have become all too familiar with the problem of vulnerable adults who fall prey to fraudulent scams and schemes carried out by skillful con artists," Watters wrote in a recent letter to the boards of directors and management of Michigan's state-chartered banks and credit unions. "Many of these scams employ trickery to convince vulnerable adults to hand over their life savings, resulting in financial ruin for victims." Watters encouraged the banks and credit unions to consider participating in a voluntary program developed by Michigan's Family Independence Agency (FIA) to assist banks and credit unions in identifying and reporting suspected cases of financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. "Even if you decide not to work with the FIA, I encourage you, through training or other means, to create an atmosphere of awareness among your front-line staff so that each of your employees is not only well-equipped to recognize the signs of financial exploitation, but is also empowered to take steps necessary to prevent the victimization," Watters stated. Commissioner Watters' complete letter to the Michigan-chartered banks and credit unions can be accessed at the OFIS Web site, <http://www.michigan.gov/ofis>, by clicking on Industry Services, then Financial Institutions. Under Financial Institutions, there is a topic choice of Communication to Financial Institutions. Commissioner Watters' letter is titled "Reporting Suspected Financial Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults." Also included under that heading is the joint opinion letter issued by several federal regulatory agencies relevant to reporting procedures for Michigan's banks, titled "Federal Regulatory Agencies' Opinion Letter About Michigan's Bank Reporting Procedures."

Wage & Hour Gains Enforcement Powers: The state's Prevailing Wage program has gained some enforcement teeth. The Wage & Hour Division has implemented a debarment policy, which prevents employers from bidding on state construction contracts for up to eight years if they violate the Prevailing Wage Act. The act allows the state, through the Wage & Hour Division, to set prevailing wage and fringe benefit rates for construction workers on state projects, but it does not allow for the assessment of a penalty by the division against those who violate the act. The new Wage & Hour debarment policy implements Gov. Jennifer Granholm's Executive Order 2003-1, which mandates that any company doing business with the state of Michigan could be "debarred," or prevented from doing further business with the state if such company violates certain state laws. The Department of Management and Budget (DMB) is charged with enforcing debarments under the executive order, which specifically includes the prevailing wage law. Contractors and subcontractors who violate the Prevailing Wage Act more than twice in a five-year period would be in violation and could be disallowed from doing further business with the state.

Making Health Care More Accessible and Affordable

Court Approves Plan to Sell The Wellness Plan: Ingham County Circuit Court Judge William E. Collette approved the Office of Financial and Insurance Services' (OFIS) plan to sell the right to serve The Wellness Plan (TWP) membership to Molina Healthcare of Michigan, McLaren Health Plan and Total Health Care, Inc. Molina Healthcare of Michigan will serve approximately 82,000 former TWP members in Wayne, Oakland, Oceana and Muskegon counties, McLaren Health Plan will serve approximately 11,800 previous Wellness Plan members in Genesee and Lapeer counties, and Total Health Care, Inc. will serve approximately 4,500 former TWP members in Macomb County. "This has been a difficult process," said OFIS Commissioner Linda A. Watters, who is the rehabilitator of The Wellness Plan. "I took steps to ensure continuity of care for those families served by The Wellness Plan and a fair return to the creditors." For more information about The Wellness Plan, please visit the OFIS web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/ofis> and click on Who We Regulate, The Wellness Plan.

Putting Home Ownership in Reach of Low-Income Citizens

Prison Build Program Builds Partnership with MSHDA: The Michigan Department of Corrections (DOC) Prison Build Program is again partnering with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to help provide low-cost housing for families in need. A new MSHDA program called the "Key to Own Homeownership Program" funded a home that was recently completed in Jackson. Participating in the project, along with the DOC Prison Build Program, were the Jackson Affordable Housing Corporation, the city of Jackson and Jackson Habitat for Humanity. Eligible low-income families holding a MSHDA Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) can take part in the new plan, which offers a homeownership option for families. Qualified tenants are able to use their voucher subsidy toward a mortgage on a home rather than toward their rent, helping families realize the dream of homeownership. The DOC Prison Build Program supplied landscaping trees and shrubs to the family to give their home a finishing touch. Inmates in the Prison Build Program at the Thumb Correctional Facility built the garage walls for the home under the tutelage of Jeff Fagan, the facility's building trades instructor. All the horticulture products for the new home came out of the Prison Build Program's new Distribution Center at Parnall Correctional Facility. Horticulture products are produced at 12 facilities across the state and are shipped to Parnall for distribution. The Prison Build Program currently partners with MSHDA on Habitat for Humanity homes but the Key to Own program is new.



Left to right, Sandy Pearson, MSHDA; Shelly Hill, new homeowner under MSHDA's Key to Own program; Lisa Lehman, MSHDA; and Jim Dodge, Jackson Prison Build Program, pick out plants at the prison nursery at the Jackson Correctional Facility for Shelly Hill's new home.

Streamlining the Permitting Process

Michigan Timely Application & Permit Service (MiTAPS) Speeds Permitting

Process: A package of bills designed to cut red tape in state government and speed the process for obtaining various state permits and licenses was signed into law by Gov. Jennifer Granholm on July 23. "Anytime we can make state government more accessible and friendly to our customers, we are exercising efficiency," Granholm said. "These new laws are just a small part of what my administration is doing to slash red tape and speed the permitting process." The governor said her initiative to put all permits online and to provide one-stop shopping for new businesses and business expansions is progressing quickly. MiTAPS (Michigan Timely Application and Permit Service) is an effort by the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) and the Department of Information Technology to create a single point of entry online for all state permits and licenses related to business projects at <http://www.michigan.gov/mitaps>. DLEG's Consumer Corner cable show features MiTAPS in August. For show times and cable providers, visit <http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/consumerscorner/>.



Director Hollister, Bureau of Construction Codes & Fire Safety Director Henry Green and MiTAPS project manager Kim Gears give a MiTAPS overview on the DLEG Consumer's Corner cable show.

Helping Michigan Businesses & Jobless Workers

RIC Project Wins Award from Detroit Chamber: The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) continues to be recognized for its technological advances. The agency's Remote Initial Claims (RIC) program has been awarded an honorable mention in the third annual "Best Practices" awards competition sponsored by the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce. The award was made in the competition's technology category. The RIC project features the telephone, Internet and Employer Filed Claims systems for filing unemployment claims. All three systems were developed in Detroit. The agency's award will be featured in the August issue of *Detroiter* magazine, a chamber publication. The Department of Information Technology, with the assistance of Sandy Damesworth, director of UIA's Benefit Services Division, and Chris Peretto, director of UIA's Customer Services, developed the write-up for the winning entry. Although the project did not take first place in the competition, one of the judges rated it number one and gave it a 10, the highest rating possible. The judge said, "Just a terrific example of how technology can add tremendous value. From cost savings in personnel, to a much more efficient process, to great time savings and convenience for the customer. This is also a good example for Michigan cities (as well as small businesses) to evaluate their manual processes. Looking at ways to streamline steps, these same technologies can be utilized for form-filling activities and information capturing." The FileNet Corporation recently named the agency's Automated Work Distribution System as one of its Innovation Award Winners for 2003.



Helping Workers When a Workers' Comp Insurer Becomes Insolvent: Over the last two years, four major insurance carriers that wrote policies for workers' disability compensation benefits have been declared insolvent: Reliance Insurance, Home Insurance, Fremont Insurance and Legion Insurance. The state of Michigan has a guaranty fund, the Michigan Property & Casualty Guaranty Association (MPCGA), which is funded by assessments from the insurance industry. MPCGA steps into the shoes of the insurance carrier when it is declared insolvent. The insurance liquidator forwards files for individuals receiving benefits at the time of insolvency to the MPCGA, which contacts those individuals and reinstates benefits. To protect an injured worker's right to further benefits, the worker must file a proof of loss form with the liquidator within one year from the date of bankruptcy. If the worker is currently receiving benefits from the MPCGA, the fund handles the filing requirement. If the worker is not receiving benefits when the insolvency occurs but may need surgery or other medical care from the past injury, the worker must still file a timely proof of loss claim. Otherwise, MPCGA will not be able to pay those benefits. The Workers' Compensation Agency maintains records of all workers that have received compensation payment from insolvent insurance carriers. The agency recently sent 1,698 letters to injured workers covered by Reliance Insurance and 1,082 letters to workers covered by Fremont. The letters advise workers how to file the proof of loss claim to protect their rights to collect future wage loss and medical benefits that may be required as a result of their past injury.

UIA Holds Advocates Seminar and Exam: UIA's Advocacy program recently held a seminar and an examination in Marquette for those interested in joining the program as advocates. Twenty-six people attended the one-day seminar, and 31 took the exam. Attendance at the seminar was not required to take the exam. Of the exam-takers, 55 percent (or 17 individuals) passed. Sixteen signed contracts to become advocates, while one person chose not to join the program at this time. The new advocates come from around the state — two are from the Upper Peninsula while others are from the Grand Rapids, Grand Traverse, Lansing and Detroit areas. Before the exam, the Advocacy program had 81 advocates representing unemployed workers and 36 representing employers for a total of 117. Advocates offer consultation, information and representation services to unemployed workers and employers who appeal decisions about either unemployment claims or taxes to administrative law judges or the Michigan Employment Security Board of Review.



Governor Reappoints Child to Funds Administration Board of Trustees: Gov. Jennifer Granholm has reappointed Mary E. (Libby) Child of Grand Rapids to the Funds Administration Board of Trustees within the Workers' Compensation Agency. The Funds Administration consists of the Self-Insurers' Security Fund; Second Injury Fund; and Silicosis, Dust Disease and Logging Industry Compensation Fund. Child represents employers who are authorized to act as self-insurers. She is also a member of the Michigan Self-Insurers' Association Board of Managers. Her new appointment runs through April 30, 2008. Other recent appointments and reappointments by the governor include:

- **Murray Gorchow, West Bloomfield**, has been named a worker's compensation magistrate. His appointment expires on January 26, 2007. He will be based in Detroit and succeeds James Brakora.
- **Mark Kaufmann, Ypsilanti** and **Neal Young, Grand Rapids** have been appointed to the Michigan Employment Security Board of Review. The terms for both appointments expire on December 31, 2007.



**Murray
Gorchow**



**Libby
Child**

Gov. Granholm's Extended Benefits Program Pays Out \$168 Million: Legislation proposed by Gov. Jennifer Granholm and signed into law last August resulted in about \$168 million being paid to unemployed Michigan workers. The legislation allowed for additional unemployment benefits to workers who exhausted both state and federal program and benefits in effect at the time. About 45,000 Michigan workers received some extended unemployment benefits, but no employers in the state received any direct charges to their unemployment tax accounts because of the program. The temporary law change made use of an unusual set of circumstances to leverage some \$25 million in state trust funds to secure federal assistance to pay the \$168 million in benefits.

UIA Opens Problem Resolution Offices to Help Those with Unemployment Claims Problems The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) has officially opened all four of its Problem Resolution Offices (PRO). The offices offer face-to-face help to unemployed workers who have questions or problems with their unemployment benefit claims. The offices are located in Gaylord, Lansing, Livonia and Marquette and are open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. They also offer telephones and computers with Internet access that unemployed workers can use to apply for unemployment benefits. The offices, however, do not accept unemployment claims. While the PROs are an important element in UIA's problem resolution system, unemployed workers are encouraged to first call the agency's toll-free telephone inquiry line at 1-866-500-0017 when seeking help with their individual claims. They can also call the Customer Relations hotline at 1-800-638-3995. Hotline staff answer general questions about unemployment benefits and help people resolve problems with their claims.

UIA Expands Hours for Internet-Filed Claims to 24 Hours on Weekdays: The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) has more than doubled the number of hours during which unemployed workers can file claims for unemployment benefits online. The agency's website (<http://www.michigan.gov/uia>) is now open for 132 straight hours every week from 7 a.m. Monday through 7 p.m. Saturday, Eastern time. Until now, the Web site had only taken unemployment claims on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Filing unemployment claims through the Internet became fully operational in late 2003. From October 2003 through late June, the online system had taken 173,570 unemployment claims, which is 25 percent of all claims filed.

Gov. Granholm Vetoes Expanding Work Hours for Minors in School: Gov. Jennifer Granholm vetoed a bill that would have increased working hours for minors during the school year. The governor said education should be the main focus for minors in school. Under current law, 16- and 17-year-old teenagers can spend a combined total of 48 hours on school and work. The vetoed bill would have boosted that total to 52 hours. Since most high schools have students in class for 30 hours a week, the bill would have increased the time they could have worked by 22 percent, from 18 to 22 hours a week. The Department of Labor & Economic Growth had recommended the governor's veto.

WCA Funds Assessments Drop in 2004: The 2004 assessments for the three funds within the Funds Administration of the Workers' Compensation Agency (WCA) collectively reported their second-smallest assessment in the past 18 years for private self-insured employers. The assessments are for the Second Injury Fund (SIF); Silicosis, Dust Disease and Logging Industry Compensation Fund (SDD&LICF); and Self-Insurers' Security Fund (SISF). These funds pay workers' compensation benefits to injured workers and/or reimburse insurance companies and self-insured employers. Money to operate the Funds Administration is collected from assessments against insurers who write workers' compensation policies in Michigan and employers who self-insure their workers' compensation liability. The assessments cover benefit payments and administrative costs for the Funds Administration. Each of the funds makes a separate assessment. The 2004 assessment for the SIF is \$6,514,448; for the SDD&LICF, \$183,794; and for the SISF, \$9,428,716. Collectively, the three fund assessments totaled \$16,126,958, which is the second-smallest collection in the past 18 years for private self-insured employers. The SIF and SDD&LICF assessments are based on a statutory formula, while the director, with the advice of the trustee representing the self-insurers, determines the SISF assessment.

Workers' Comp Appellate Commission Holds First-Ever Oral Argument in U.P.:

The Workers' Compensation Appellate Commission recently made history by holding what is thought to be its first-ever oral argument in the Upper Peninsula (U.P.). A commission panel traveled to Sault Ste. Marie to conduct the oral argument. Oral argument can be useful for several reasons. First, it helps focus on the issues presented in cases that are of keen interest to those involved with workers' compensation law. Secondly, it gives the parties another chance to be heard and to discuss with commissioners the facts and issues of the case in a lively, interactive way. Finally, oral argument gives commissioners an invaluable opportunity to exchange ideas and views with workers' compensation attorneys in a setting that enhances understanding and cooperation. Ultimately, oral argument, in appropriate cases, allows the commission to deepen its understanding of cases and enhance the quality of its opinions. Regional hearings enable the commission to stay better informed and in touch with its partners, while enhancing the quality of its decisions. They also seem to facilitate a more relaxed atmosphere and a better debate of the issues. Oral argument before the appellate commission can be requested and will be granted liberally where appropriate and may also be scheduled on the commission's own motion. Where feasible, commission members will travel to conduct oral arguments.



Participants in the Workers' Compensation Appellate Commission's first-ever oral arguments in the U.P. are: (left to right) Thomas Moher, attorney; Rodger Will, commissioner; Bill Reamon Jr., commission chair; James Kent, commissioner; and Timothy Hass, attorney. Moher is from Sault Ste. Marie and Hass is from Gaylord.

MARVIN Now Speaks Spanish: The Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) MARVIN system has become bilingual. It now speaks Spanish, as well as English. MARVIN, which stands for Michigan's Automated Response Voice Interactive Network, is a telephone-based system that unemployed workers who have filed for unemployment benefits must phone every other week to certify their eligibility for benefits. After the certification call, MARVIN will authorize the issuing of an unemployment check to eligible callers. Callers can reach the Spanish MARVIN by dialing the system's toll-free number at 1-866-638-3993 and selecting the Spanish-language option.

Claims-by-Mail Usage Drops Sharply: With the growing familiarity and use of the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) electronic and employer-based systems for filing unemployment claims, use of the claims-by-mail process has dropped sharply and steadily. Since the statewide introduction of the telephone-filed claims process in mid-October 2003, usage of the claims-by-mail program dropped from 23 percent of all claims filed to 1.2 percent by June 2004. The decline in usage is in line with the agency's goal of reducing use of the mail process to 1.0 percent by June. The claims-by-mail program was installed in November 2002 as a temporary means of filing claims when the agency was forced to close its network of branch offices and its telephone and Internet system were not ready for full implementation.

Deadline for Workers' Compensation Board of Magistrates is Sept. 14: The DLEG Qualifications Advisory Committee (QAC) is seeking qualified applicants for positions on the Workers' Compensation Board of Magistrates. Applications from those wishing to apply must be received by September 14, 2004. Vacancies are expected on the board effective January 26, 2005. An applicant must be a member in good standing with the State Bar of Michigan and have five years experience as an attorney in the field of workers' compensation or successfully complete an examination. The examination will be offered September 22 in Lansing. Applicants for the Board of Magistrates examination will be tested on knowledge of the Workers' Disability Compensation Act, Michigan Rules of Evidence, fact-finding skills, and knowledge of human anatomy and physiology. Those who previously passed the exam do not have to retake it. The committee wishes to interview all candidates who seek to be recommended for appointment. Accordingly, anyone interested in a position, including those who have previously qualified, must submit a new application form and be interviewed by the QAC during October 2004. Application forms are available on the agency's Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/wca> or by calling (517) 322-1106. All applicants must complete this form including those who previously qualified, those wishing to take the exam, and those basing their application on five years of experience. Interested parties must send a résumé to: Qualifications Advisory Committee ATTN: Susan Bickel, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Workers' Compensation Agency, P.O. Box 30016, Lansing, MI 48909.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15-Oct. 15: The Michigan Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs (COSSA), which is housed in the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG), celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month annually from September 15 to October 15 along with state and national organizations. This month is dedicated each year to commemorate the contributions made by Hispanics throughout our nation's history. It is a month to reflect not only on the past, but on the future, and on the role of Hispanics in the United States. In Michigan, many local activities and events are held in most major cities throughout Hispanic Heritage Month. These activities and events are sponsored by community-based organizations which strive to acknowledge the Hispanic heritage. As a tribute to their efforts, the number of local activities and events sponsored by both Hispanic and non-Hispanic organizations continues to grow. One of the events COSSA helps sponsor is the Michigan Hispanic Caucus Celebration, which will be held at the State Capitol and surrounding facilities on Wednesday, September 15. The event will feature motivational speakers, lunchtime music, dancers, Capitol tours, museum tours and many more events selected to highlight Hispanic contributions to the state of Michigan. A recognition and scholarship award program will be held in the evening to help send Hispanic youth to colleges and universities and to honor community leaders. Organizers for the event include State Senator Valde Garcia, former State Representative Belda Garza, and the Hispanic Heritage Month Committee. An estimated 1,500 Hispanic students are expected to be in attendance, along with Hispanic entrepreneurs and businesses. "This year's event is dedicated to the motivation of Hispanic students to continue with their education and strive to be strong contributors to our families and our society," Executive Director Marylou Olivarez-Mason said. "There will also be a Hispanic Business Educational Summit where we will offer education and networking opportunities with the help of federal and state business support services." Hispanic organizations across the state will assist individuals in setting up appointments with legislators and department heads during the day. Representatives from major businesses and their associations will also be explaining the process of federal, state and private contract acquisition. COSSA was created in 1975 to serve Michigan's growing Spanish-speaking population and focuses on education, employment, civil rights, health, housing, and senior citizens, just to name a few issues. For more information, please visit <http://www.michigan.gov/cossa> or call the commission at (517) 373-8339. COSSA and Hispanic Heritage Month is also the featured topic on "Consumer's Corner" hosted by Director David C. Hollister with special guests COSSA Chair Ricardo Verdoni and Executive Director Marylou Olivarez-Mason. The show (<http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/consumerscorner/>) will be airing in September on cable stations across the state.



The Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs and staff includes: (backrow l-r) Vicky Potter, Teresa Lamb, Marylou Mason, Randall Fernandez, Ricardo Verdoni, Johnny Morales, Enrique Carrillo, front row (l-r) Julie Drumm (Intern), Jose Reyna, Maria Guetierrez-Ostrander, Emily Martinez, Frances Plets, Danette Duron-Willner, and Sergio Paneque.

Developing a 21st Century Workforce

Entrepreneurship Curriculum Development Grant Workshop Set for September 24: A workshop on developing entrepreneurship educational programs in high schools and community colleges and the grants available to assist in the initiative will be offered to existing Tech Prep consortia on September 24 at the Holiday Inn South in Lansing. The Office of Career and Technical Preparation in the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) is hosting the event. DLEG's goals for entrepreneurship education as part of "Reshape Michigan's Workforce Development Strategy" are twofold: develop postsecondary entrepreneurship certificate and degree programs focusing on an accelerated associate degree in entrepreneurship for high school and young adult students; and encourage schools to offer grade-level appropriate entrepreneurship curricula to ensure that all high school students graduate with knowledge of what it takes to start and run a business. The outcome of the grant is for each participating Tech Prep Consortium to develop and implement at least six entrepreneurship programs that begin in career and technical education programs at the high school level and lead to and culminate in an associate degree or certificate program at the community college level. Each existing Tech Prep Consortium (25 in Michigan) may apply for a competitive grant to develop an entrepreneurship curriculum. A total of \$1.2 million is available for this initiative. Applications must be postmarked no later than November 1. The grant period is November 15 through August 31, 2005. Grants will be funded by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998.

May Visions 2004 Vendor Fair in Ann Arbor a Success: The Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) and the Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled cosponsored another very successful vendor fair on May 5 with more than 1,100 participants. This third biannual event, featuring new technology and products for the blind, was held at the Morris Lawrence Building, Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor. Evaluations from attendees, staff and the 52 vendors were all extremely favorable. Visions 2006 is already in the planning stages.

Economic Development Job Training Grants Help Update Job Skills: Economic Development Job Training (EDJT) grants offered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) will help workers update their job skills. The projects are as follows:

Job Training to Assist 684 General Motors and Four Winns Workers: Increasing the technical skills of employees will make General Motors and Four Winns workers more competitive in the global economy. One hundred eighty-four Four Winns workers in Cadillac will receive specialized training in various disciplines including engineering, design and lean manufacturing as a result of a \$114,439 EDJT grant. Five hundred employees at the General Motors Technical Center in Warren will benefit from \$500,000 in EDJT funds. Workers will receive specialized training in the latest software applications for vehicle design.

Job Training Assistance for Two West Michigan Companies: Ninety-three employees at American Autocoat in Hudsonville and Spicer Heavy Axle & Brake in Kalamazoo will benefit from \$67,970 in EDJT grants. The funding will be awarded to Grand Rapids Community College and Kalamazoo Valley Community College to provide the training.

- Grand Rapids Community College will receive a \$17,970 grant to provide technical training to 33 current and new employees of American Autocoat. Located in Hudsonville, the company's primary service is the application of automotive body color finishes to plastic and composite products for tier-one and -two automotive suppliers.
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College will utilize a \$50,000 grant to provide training for 60 existing employees of Spicer Heavy Axle & Brake Inc. in Kalamazoo. Spicer, a division of Dana Corporation's Heavy Truck Group, engineers and produces strategic components, modules and systems for medium and heavy truck manufacturers worldwide.

Workers to Receive IT Training: Gov. Jennifer Granholm announced two companies will receive a total of \$170,000 in EDJT funding, benefiting a total of 397 workers.

- Sixty-two employees at B3 Computers in Gwinn will benefit from a \$45,000 EDJT grant. Workers will receive specialized training in information technology, technical processes and management, which will make the company more competitive in the global economy. Most of this funding will go toward training new hires for the new B3 facility. The result will be a larger pool of highly trained workers in the area who will serve as a catalyst to bring more investment and jobs. B3 has chosen Northern Michigan University to provide the training. Under the requirements of the program, the company will provide a 25 percent funding match. The San Diego-based computer manufacturer is in the process of locating a new production plant in the Marquette County Renaissance Zone at the former K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in Gwinn. The Renaissance Zone location will allow the company to operate free of virtually all state and local taxes.
- Three hundred and thirty-five employees at Inalfa Roof Systems in Auburn Hills will benefit from a \$125,000 EDJT grant for information technology and process improvement skills, which will make the company more competitive in the global economy. The company has chosen Oakland Community College to provide the training. Under the requirements of the program, the company will provide a 25 percent funding match. German-based Inalfa is a world leader in the engineering and assembly of high-tech automotive roof systems.

2004 Michigan Works! for People Conference to be held September 12-14: The 19th annual Michigan Works! for People Conference will be held in Mt. Pleasant, MI, September 12-14 at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort. As times change it is important to regroup and connect with peers to learn cutting-edge strategies and discuss best practices. At this year's Michigan Works! for People Conference, partnerships will be strengthened, innovators will be honored and strategies will be developed to successfully navigate the ever-changing workforce development scene. People who are interested in Michigan's workforce development system will find topics to suit them at this year's conference. From policy-makers to front-line staff, all will find value in the workshops offered. Keynote speakers include Jack Bacon, a noted futurist, Marilyn Moats Kennedy, a workforce system profiler, and David Bradley, a national champion for Michigan's workforce development system. Information on registering for the conference or being a conference sponsor is available at <http://www.michiganworks.org>.

MCB Participates in Detroit Career Awareness "Choices Fair": The Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) participated in a career awareness Choices Fair on May 20 at Cobo Hall in Detroit, with Detroit office staff Claudia Jones, King Nelson and Shawnee Laury-Johnson onsite at the event. The fair provided opportunities for high school seniors with disabilities, their parents, and school staff to become familiar with an array of service providers to assist in vocational, educational and employment endeavors. In addition to assisting high school students with career information, MCB events such as this serve to increase community awareness of blindness and the services available from the Michigan Commission for the Blind.

Michigan Career and Technical Institute Graduates 119 Students: The Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) in Barry County graduated 119 students from throughout the state of Michigan recently. State Representative Fulton Sheen of Plainwell delivered the commencement remarks. Operated by the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, MCTI provides vocational training in 12 different career areas for adults with disabilities: cabinetmaking, culinary arts, custodial, drafting, electronics, grounds maintenance/landscaping, machine technology, office automation, PC specialist, printing, and retail marketing.

Youth Leadership Forum Helps High School Students With Disabilities Become Leaders of Tomorrow: The fifth annual Michigan Youth Leadership Forum for high school students with disabilities was held June 13-17 at Michigan State University. Thirty-four students from across the state were selected through a competitive application process and attended at no cost to their families. "This annual program gives young people an opportunity to learn about public service in our state's capital," Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) Director David C. Hollister said. "I think this hands-on approach is one of the best ways high school students can prepare to be leaders in their local communities and eventually at the state level." The forum program is based on mentor relationships and developing leadership by example, Hollister said. Successful adults with disabilities serve as mentors in their roles as program presenters and small group leaders. DLEG's Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns coordinates the annual event with numerous partners and supporters. General Motors donated \$20,000 to the forum for the fifth year. "General Motors and the GM Foundation are pleased to support programs and organizations such as the Michigan Youth Leadership Forum that make a meaningful contribution to the quality of life for all people," said Lorna G. Utley, GM Public Policy and Community Relations director. "Through the forum, adult leaders, who themselves have learned to be successful in life though challenged by disability, serve as unique role models for young people facing similar circumstances. These high school students, some for the very first time, have the opportunity to network, learn and have fun with others." Additional supporters are the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), MDCH's Children with Special Needs Fund, the Family Independence Agency, Peckham Industries Inc., and Michigan Rehabilitation Association. "Students throughout the state who participate may very well find their destiny as future leaders because they will have had a chance to learn more about themselves and their potential," said Governor Jennifer Granholm. "I believe the week will make a lasting impression on their lives." For more information about the Michigan Youth Leadership Forum, contact Barbara Barton at (517) 334-8000 or bartonb2@michigan.gov.

Michigan Works! Agencies Receive Federal Grants to Provide Labor Exchange Services: Michigan Works! Agencies began receiving Wagner-Peyser grants to provide labor exchange services to Michigan's job seekers and businesses. For the program year July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005, Michigan will receive a total of \$24,993,149 from the U.S. Department of Labor to deliver labor exchange services and support the Michigan Talent Bank.

2004 Breaking Traditions Awards Recognize Students in Nontraditional Career Paths: The Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) Office of Career & Technical Preparation honored 23 students at the third annual "Breaking Traditions" Awards ceremony in the rotunda at the State Capitol in Lansing. The students came from across the state to be recognized for their achievements in pursuing career or technical education programs or postsecondary occupational programs that are non-traditional for their gender. A special guest at the event was Judy Karandjeff, executive director of the Michigan Women's Commission. More than 100 family members, teachers and friends attended along with several legislators who congratulated students from their respective districts.

Kathy Salow to Receive Excellence in Customer Service Award: Kathy Salow, the Upper Peninsula analyst of the Department of Labor & Economic Growth's (DLEG's) Office of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives, will receive the Michigan Works! Association's "Excellence in Customer Service Award" at the association's annual conference September 13. Salow was nominated to receive this prestigious award for her exemplary service by the Job Force Board, the Michigan Works! Agency which serves the central Upper Peninsula. The board relies heavily on Kathy Salow's expertise and data to continually adjust its strategic plan and activities that support that plan, as labor market information is critical to the success of business attraction, retention and expansion activities in the central Upper Peninsula as well to potential job seekers. Salow sits on the UP Healthcare Roundtable and the Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance, and she is an ongoing contributor of labor market information to the Job Force Board's Strategic Planning Committee. At any given time, and generally at the last minute, Salow comes through with the labor market data requested. Her proven positive impact in the workplace and her ability to go the extra mile makes her an outstanding recipient of the Michigan Works! "Excellence in Customer Service Award."

Workforce Transition Section (WTS) Assists Employers and Displaced Workers: The Workforce Transition Section (WTS) responded to 19 notices of planned plant closures or mass layoffs in the last month. Contact was made with employers and union representatives in response to receipt of a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification WARN notice, letter, phone call, newspaper article, or other means of notification. A brief overview of available dislocated worker services was given, and depending on the number of jobs impacted, a formal on-site Rapid Response team meeting was scheduled or arrangements were made for the local Michigan Works! Agency to meet with the affected employees to provide information on available services. Other services provided:

- Conducted six Rapid Response Meetings with employers (and union representatives, where employees were represented by a collective bargaining agreement).
- Responded to 69 phone calls and 24 e-mails from individuals, company/union representatives, and service providers who requested information or clarification of issues related to the WARN Act and dislocated worker services.
- Participated in 11 Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC) meetings. Joint Adjustment Committees are established to provide a more proactive, participatory response to large plant closings or mass layoffs.

Michiganians with Disabilities Enter Job Market: Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) assisted 1,033 Michiganians with disabilities into jobs during the month of June. During the same period, MRS worked with 254 Michigan businesses on disability-related issues such as work site accommodations.

Office of Career and Technical Preparation Awards Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grants: The Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) Office of Career and Technical Preparation (OCTP) awarded 2004-05 Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants to 25 regions statewide. Awards were made in accordance with the federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998. The 25 regions, which parallel the Workforce Development regional structure, are receiving CTE Perkins (Title I) funding totaling \$21,090,600 and Tech Prep (Title II) funding totaling \$3,549,600. Individual regional awards vary from \$48,775 (Tech Prep) to \$4,570,486 (CTE Perkins). Examples of funding uses include: program improvement, professional development, secondary/postsecondary program articulation agreements, special populations assistance, guidance and counseling and data collection.

Office of Career and Technical Education Pilots New TRAC System for Grant Compliance: During the 2003-2004 academic year the Office of Career and Technical Preparation (OCTP) piloted a new grant compliance and technical assistance system. The Technical Review, Assistance and Compliance (TRAC) system was piloted with five regions receiving funding administered by OCTP. In June, OCTP met with representatives from those regions to obtain input/suggestions for improving the process, forms and procedures. The TRAC process requires that OCTP staff conduct annual on-site visits for 20 percent of the regions receiving OCTP funding. The visits have four components of review: federal and state grant processes; financial information; data/evaluation; and approved CTE (CIP) program review. TRAC intended outcomes include:

- Verification of program quality and student performance.
- Assurance that funds have been expended appropriately and are used in compliance with state and federal policies and mandates, including Title I (Secondary) and Title II (Tech Prep) of the Carl D. Perkins Act; and Section 61a(1), Added Cost, and Section 61a(2), Administrator Reimbursement, of the State School Aid Act.
- Protection against waste, fraud and abuse.
- Identification of needs and provision of technical assistance.
- Identification of promising practices.

Office of Career and Technical Preparation Leads Nation in Career Cluster Implementation: The Office of Career and Technical Preparation (OCTP) has been a forerunner in the national Career Cluster project. Michigan took the responsibility to develop the Education and Training Career Cluster. The quality of the materials developed has led to OCTP staff being asked to lend expertise to other states and Clusters. OCTP has also been leading the way in the nation in implementation of Career Clusters in Michigan. All of the state-approved Career and Technical Education Programs in Michigan will be aligned to the appropriate Career Cluster by September of 2005. Many clusters are already cross-walked to the Michigan Curriculum Frameworks. Career Clusters are the first national approach to a set of standards in Career and Technical Education. They are a grouping of occupations and broad industries based on commonalities. The 16 Clusters represent the knowledge and skills, both academic and technical, that all students should achieve. In Michigan, the six Career Pathways have been used very successfully in 90% of Michigan's schools. The Career Clusters further refine Career Pathways. A Career Pathway/Cluster crosswalk and all Career Cluster booklets may viewed at <http://www.michigan.gov/dleg>. Booklets are also available at <http://www.careerclusters.org>. All Clusters were developed by nationally represented advisory committees with secondary and postsecondary educators, and business and industry, validated, and will ultimately involve national assessments. The national Career Cluster initiative was designed and developed under a cooperative agreement with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education. The product development, dissemination and validation is now managed by the National Association of States' Directors of Career and Technical Education consortium (NASDCTEc). According to NASDCTEc, 45 percent of schools nationally are organizing around Career Clusters; 46 states are implementing some version of Clusters. School counselors are using the clusters as a career guidance strategy. Fifty-five percent of the states are using career clusters to aid the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. In a recent Delaware study, 62 percent of secondary students who picked a cluster and stayed with it in college completed a four-year degree. Only 26 percent of students who had no focus or changed majors completed a four-year degree.

DLEG Helps Bring More Funds to Michigan to Expand GEAR UP! Program: More funds are coming to Michigan to expand the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP) thanks to help from DLEG and the Office of Postsecondary Services. The office provided assistance to constituent groups competing in a national competition sponsored by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships and the SBC Foundation. One-year grants totaling \$349,065 were awarded to Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Saginaw Valley State University, Partnership for Learning, and Oakland University. Grants will fund several services including technology-based after-school programs to help students in math, science, reading and technology. GEAR UP is a U.S. Department of Education discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides five-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. The GEAR Up Michigan! program is in its fourth year of a five-year state award and serves middle and high school students in Flint, Pontiac, Benton Harbor, Muskegon, Battle Creek, Bangor and Detroit.

Bettie Shaw-Henderson Named MRS Deputy Director: Bettie Shaw-Henderson has been appointed deputy director of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) effective July 6. Bettie was manager of the MRS Grand Rapids District Office, where she led the MRS workforce development effort as a Kent-Allegan Workforce Development Executive Board member. At the national level, Bettie has been president of the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA), national Job Placement Division leader, National Association of Multi-Cultural Rehabilitation Concerns board member, and president of the Michigan Rehabilitation Association.



Health Care Training Offered: The Michigan Career & Technical Institute is offering new training programs in health care. Nursing Assistant and Assisted Living Worker are being offered this fall. Both are 20-week programs. Nursing Assistants provide basic patient care for residents in a health care facility, such as a nursing home or adult day care facility, helping to maintain a safe and clean environment. They have direct contact with residents, making them part of the health care team. Certification with the state of Michigan is required. Assisted Living Workers provide basic patient care in an assisted living facility or adult foster care home. Their duties are to help higher functioning persons remain in a home-like environment. Housekeeping and meal preparation skills are necessary; certification is not a requirement. For more information, contact Dale Chapman, RN, CNA instructor, at (269) 664-9200 or Kelley Blodger, Admissions, at (269) 664-9248.

Matching Employers & Workers via the Internet

Career Portal Features New Links, New Resources: Additional links added to Career Portal (<http://www.michigan.gov/careers>) provide new and unique resources under the following categories:

Jobseekers: Other Opportunities for College Graduates, Michigan Teacher Network-Job Listings, Internships, and Stay-At-Home Mothers Who Want To Return To Work

Employers: Construction Industry Services, Automation Alley in SE Michigan, AllPages.com., and Michigan Timely Application & Permit Service (MiTAPS)

Students & Parents: Parent Involvement Guide - America's Career Resource Network, and Skills Profiler
Education & Training: New and Emerging Occupations - a module that includes 40 occupational summaries (also integrated into the Career Exploration component)

Support Services: Employer/Business Locator application module

Michigan Talent Bank Survey Results Continue to Show High Satisfaction Rate: The most recent MTB survey results continue to indicate a high satisfaction rate for both job seekers and businesses.

Job Seekers: 43% of registered job seekers applied for job openings listed in MTB; 83% were satisfied with MTB job listings; 73% indicated they would use the MTB again.

Employers: 56% of new businesses registered with MTB interviewed job seekers; 62% were contacted by a suitable number of qualified job seekers in response to their posted job order; and 95% indicated they would use MTB again.